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# BEING SUNDANESE AND JAVANESE CULTURAL PERSONS AND CHURCH MEMBERS

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## ABSTRACT

For the Christians in Java, being cultural persons has been taken for granted in their daily life, but being church members is something that they are learning and realising in their participation in the church community. This distinction emerges when the faithful are committing themselves to the church along their journey through the sociocultural reality. In the 'new' community, which in the context of this article is the church, they see their being cultural persons in a different way and reimagine their identity in the daily experiences and the encounters with others. This article is an effort to listen to the believers' imagination by considering their sociocultural images in imagining the church from within their local perspectives. Doing ecclesiology in this way is a journey to accompany and to listen to the local believers in search of their own 'church'. The author puts the survey among the Catholics in two parishes in West and Central Java and the analysis of its results within the context of

doing contextual theology of the church by qualitatively and intuitively exploring the local believers' cultural images.

**Key Words:**

•*Images* •*Cultural images* •*Church images* •*Imagination* •*Imagerial preference* •*Participation* •*Contextual and meaningful images* •*Culturally embedded images* •*Ecclesiology*.

## Introduction

This article is based on an exploratory survey concerning how the believers' cultural images are contemplated and projected onto the church. This projecting process is stimulated by the believers' transformative imagination. It is transformative in the way that it re-imagines the church from the believers' sociocultural perspective and in so doing it transforms their ways of *being* and *becoming* the church members. This imagination 'realises' the church figure in the minds of the believers thanks to their cultural images.<sup>1</sup> Within this framework, I analyse the results of my observation on how the believers live their life as cultural persons and at the same time as members of the church. I will explore how the believers imagine the church through their (a) *imagerial preferences*, (b) interpretations of the *church's relevance* in the society, and (c) *intentions to participate* in the church. These dimensions were proposed based upon the tendencies surfacing from their responses in my preceding survey<sup>2</sup> and in order to facilitate the formulation of questionnaire statements in this survey. The fourth dimension was dedicated to (d) the believers' *contextual and meaningful images* to explore their responses on some actual topics from the church's realities in Java. Four questions I want to explore are: Which are the believers' *imagerial preferences* with regard to the aspects of the church? Which images of the church may illustrate the *relevance of the church* in the society? Which are *the believers' intentions* that may motivate them to participate in the church activities? Which are the *contextual and meaningful images* that may sustain the existence of the church in Java?

## The Respondents

The questionnaires were answered by the Catholics from the parish "Kristus Raja" in Cigugur, West Java, and the parish "Hati Kudus Yesus" in

Ganjuran, Central Java. The first is a parish indicating the Sundanese culture, and the latter indicating the Javanese culture. The survey, conducted in April 2008, was carried on by inviting the believers to the meetings, which were organised by the parishes not only for the purpose of this survey but mainly for the purpose of some actual topics among the believers (i.e., about Catholic marriage, biblical images of Mary, and the ways of serving others in Christ). Our respondents from both parishes are in total 699 Catholics, ranging from the age of thirteen to above sixty three (see Table 1). From that amount, 281 (40.2%) are from Cigugur and 418 (59.8%) from Ganjuran. Altogether 377 respondents are male and 320 are female, with 2 missing values. It appears on the Table that 31.2% of our respondents have been baptised for about 40 years, 19.7% for about 30 years, 14.3% for about 20 years, and 21% for about 10 years. We can see on the Table that 79.1% of the respondents were raised by their Catholic parents, while 13.9% by their Moslem parents, 4% by traditional belief followers and 3% by others (including Hindu, Budha and Protestant parents)

Table 1 *Characteristics of the Respondents*

Age	N	%	Year of Baptism	N	%
13 - 22 years old	161	23.1	< = 1950	16	2.3
23 - 32 years old	38	5.4	1951 - 1960	41	5.9
33 - 42 years old	126	18.1	1961 - 1970	218	31.2
43 - 52 years old	181	25.9	1971 - 1980	138	19.7
53 - 62 years old	130	18.6	1981 - 1990	100	14.3
63 + years old	62	8.9	1991 - 2000	147	21.0
missing value	1		> 2000	39	5.6
Sex	N	%	Parents' Religion	N	%
Male	377	54.1	Catholic	551	79.1
Female	320	45.9	Islam	97	13.9
missing value	2		Traditional Belief	28	4.0
Level of Education	N	%	Other	21	3.0
Elementary School	144	20.6	missing value	2	
Junior High School	206	29.5	Occupation	N	%
Senior High School	230	32.9	Employee	51	7.3
Certified Diploma	66	9.4	Entrepreneur	82	11.7
Bachelor's Degree	51	7.3	Lecturer	2	.3
Master's Degree	2	.3	Pensioner	34	4.9
Occupation	N	%	Religious	4	.6
Student	156	22.3			
Housewife	124	17.7			
Labourer	51	7.3			
Farmer	94	13.4			
Civil Employee	40	5.7			
Teacher	61	8.7			

### Survey Results: Cultural Images of the Church

## 1. The Believers' Imagerial Preferences

Several aspects of the church have been preferred by our respondents. Most prominent are aspects of the church that show communality and companionship. However, some aspects, though seem to embrace cultural values, were not preferred for some reasons. We may suppose that the associations of some aspects in a statement might have caused the differences. We will go through the aspects while at the same time try to analyse the possible reasons behind the believers' responses.

(1) *Familiarity*. One of the church aspects which attract the respondents is its familial aspect. It is obvious from Q1, which states that “participating in church meetings makes me feel united with other faithful, like a big family.” The believers' responses on this statement have shown considerable accord because of the low variability ( $Sd = .64$ ). When those who answered “agree” and “completely agree” to this statement are combined, the percentage becomes 94.5% of all the respondents. Note that Q1 mentions the image of a big family related with the believers' participation in the church meetings. However, it seems that the meetings need not be 'big' if we consider the responses on Q2 (“I feel myself more devoted as a church member if the church meetings and prayers are attended by many believers”). The results on Q2 show spreading scores of 24.8% “less agree”, 36.3% “agree” and 27.7% “completely agree”. While the believers tend to “agree” on this statement, we can presume that they are more or less aware that the presence of many people in the church meetings is not the only reason for them to feel more devoted as church members. In other words, the church meetings need not be attended by many believers in order to motivate the believers' awareness as the members of the church. It is the feeling of being *united* as a *family* in the church that strongly influences the believers' enthusiasm.

(2) *Communality* and *encounter*. The familial character is explained further on Q8, which states that “participating in the church activities is best done together with all my family.” 82.0% of the respondents (completely) agree to this statement. Here we can see further attitude on the familial aspect of the church, which is now related with qualitative communality. It is 'qualitative' in a sense that it emphasises *togetherness* rather than the number of those who are present. The believers seem to find togetherness more easily in the meetings characterised by familiarity, that is, the meetings where they can be present together with their families.

Statement Q3 says that “the church is a place of encounter with our fellows of the same faith in order to strengthen our fraternity.” On this statement, 85.8% of the believers responded “(completely) agree.” This means that the church seems to have been viewed as a place of encounter for the believers, a place to meet the others and to strengthen the fellowship. Of course there are also other meetings among the believers held by the society, but the high percentage of agreement that the church is a place of encounter confirms a significant character of the church meetings.

In line with Q3, the awareness that they come together as brothers and sisters of the same faith also plays a role in these encounters. When they see each other in church meetings, there should be an advance in their being a 'new' family in the church. When there is a growing trust to each other in these meetings, it should be quite reasonable if there is also a growing trust to the church. And this can be seen from the result of Q9, which states that “the church can be trusted to help resolve problems in the family.” 83.6% of the respondents expressed their (complete) agreement to this statement. We could say that *trust* is what characterises the church meetings in order to mirror the true communal encounters of the believers. The statement Q9 simply shows that most of the believers can rely on the church (leaders and representatives) to help their problems in the family.

(3) *Caring community*. Another high approved statement is Q10, stating, “the local church is taking care of the weak, the humble and those who are facing difficulties in their lives.” From the results, 85.7% of the respondents “(completely) agree” with this. The statement was actually translated in the local language by stimulating the believers' responses to the reality in their church. Therefore, this response is quite an assessment of the believers on one of the church aspects in practice, namely, its *caring* aspect. Still, this assessment seems to be based on the believers' own experiences as members of the church. Referring to the wellknown “*gotong-royong*”<sup>3</sup> in the societies in Java, we can perceive that this preference is also stimulated by communality. The church, as well as the society, should continue to care for the weak and the needy. It is from this preference that the churches in Java seem to have been accustomed to be self-supporting communities.

(4) *Hospitality and accommodativeness*. While the term 'hospitality' is probably very common, its application in relation with the society could give a different emphasis. The believers have responded quite positively (65.1% “agree” and 19.1% “completely agree”) on Q11, stating that “the value of hospitality as taught by the church has always been edified by the

society.” This statement tried to express that hospitality has had its significance in the society. In our questionnaire, hospitality was translated into “*keramahmatan*” (Ind. 'friendliness', 'kindness'). In this sense, we can find a degree of relatedness with how the believers evaluate the church leaders in their pastoral lives. Regarding the statement saying that “the church leaders are quite accomodating (*supple*) to the faithful in matters of pastoral policy” (Q15), 81.9% of our respondents express their “(complete) agreement”. We may assume that what is preferred by the believers is particularly the *accommodativeness*. The believers assessment on their church leaders could have echoed their expectation on how the church should be. The church should be accommodative in its character, or in other words, it should make rooms for differences.

(5) *Cultural values; not simply cultural 'products'*. Some statements concerning the culture in this dimension have been responded differently by the believers. Some of the responses are quite surprising that they need to be analysed further. It means that with regard to the cultural aspects of the church in Java, we must clearly distinguish the believers' preferences in order to do justice to the results of our survey. Two statements (Q7 and Q14) were responded positively, and four statements (Q4, Q5, Q6 and Q12) were responded with a slight tendency towards “less agree”. The assumption behind these statements was that the local believers might prefer to have a cultural tone in their prayers and meetings. However, that was simply not the case according to the results. However, when the inculturating effort is conducted by providing space for more 'applicable' interpretation (related to the actual life and culture), the responses tend to be positive.

We notice that the believers' responses towards Q7 (“The catechesis has used a lot of stories and images from the Sundanese/Javanese culture to explain about the church”) showed 68.3% “agree” and 14.9% “completely agree”. Their responses towards Q14 (“The church need to teach about the importance of cultural values in the believer's life as church member”) are 59.7% “agree” and 29.9% “completely agree”. The latter (Q14) has been viewed not merely as a matter of 'teaching', but a matter of the teaching material, that is, the cultural values. This interpretation is drawn from a comparison with Q13 (“The church need to teach more about faith and Scriptures to the believers rather than simply organise services and ceremonies”) which scored 38.0% “less agree”, 33.7% “agree” and 16.0% “completely agree”.

It is also possible that the responses towards Q13 tend to “less agree” because it seems to contrast the teaching responsibility with the church's role to organise services—the matters that in the minds of the believers probably do not need to be contrasted.

Table 4 *Cultural Applications*

	Statement	CNA	NA	LA	A	CA	M	Sd
Q4	The <i>Scriptures</i> and the church <i>services</i> are better conveyed in the Sundanese/Javanese <i>language</i> .	.4%	6.9%	27.1%	43.4%	22.2%	3.80	.88
Q5	I feel it more <i>serene</i> in praying when the church ceremony is accompanied by ‘ <i>gamelan</i> ’ (=Javanese/Sundanese set of traditional musical instruments).	1.9%	7.9%	40.0%	35.9%	14.3%	3.53	.90
Q6	The <i>Eucharist</i> and church <i>services</i> should be creatively accompanied with <i>cultural dances</i> , <i>processions</i> and <i>rituals</i> .	2.9%	13.1%	45.3%	31.1%	7.6%	3.27	.89
Q12	<i>Symbols</i> from the Sundanese/Javanese <i>culture</i> need to be used in the church <i>liturgies</i> as well.	.7%	5.6%	30.0%	53.7%	10.0%	3.67	.76

The other four statements regarding the cultural 'products' (Table 4) seemed to have shown the believers' different responses. While seeing that there are also many people who agree with the statements, we can notice that there are some other who less agree or even don't agree. Surprisingly, these less-agreements are directed towards direct applications of cultural 'products' in church prayers and services. It means that our respondents seemed quite critical in using cultural artefacts in the church activities. Those who responded less or not agree on the use of *local language* in church services (Q4) might not be accustomed anymore with the local language,<sup>4</sup> and on the contrary, a degree of preference towards the national language ('Bahasa Indonesia') might be presumed because of its more unifying character.

The next two statements (Q5 and Q6) may have shown the believers' attitudes in differentiating the church ceremonies and the cultural rituals. Both statements received 40% or more of less-agreements. Based on the responses on Q5, for instance, it means that the serenity in prayer is not always stimulated by the playing of '*gamelan*' instruments. *Gamelan* is very familiar for the Sundanese as well as the Javanese, and in fact both parishes already arrange that every week one or two masses are accompanied with *gamelan*. However, this does not always mean that the church prayers should be accompanied with *gamelan*. The same analogy also applies to the



interpretation of statement Q6, which mentions the use of cultural dances, processions and rituals. These cultural 'products' may articulately express the believers' cultural attitudes, but their employment in the church services and liturgies is not readily taken for granted. We might want to confer this with responses on statement Q12, showing a moderate amount of those less and not agree with the use of cultural symbols in church liturgies. The believers' predilection to safeguard their cultural values (cf. Q14 above) is quite obvious, but it appears that they consciously distinguish them from the Christian values embedded in the church liturgies.

## 2. The Church's Relevance in the Society

Analysing the relevance of the church in the society in Java would be obligatory, given that this in one way or another could reveal the intentions behind the believers' preferences. The position of the church in the society would be assessed by the believers to reflect on their own participations in the church. In this section we will try to explore the *relations* of the church with the society, particular *roles* of the church and the believers' *preferences* in assessing the church's position.

(1) *A church blending in the society.* Three statements from our questionnaire gaining quite high percentage of agreement are Q18, Q21 and Q22. Q18, which says that "the local church leaders can assimilate well and interact closely with the surrounding society", received a total of 92.5% "(complete) agreements" from the respondents. The capability of the church leaders to assimilate themselves in the society is regarded by the believers as an important and appropriate attitude. We might think of a particular social background underlying this assessment, namely that people need to get along with each other, to get involved in dialogues and interactions and to be 'friendly' (Ind. 'ramah')<sup>5</sup> in the society, as it were. It brings the consequence that when the church is regarded as a community or represented by a person, there will be an expectation that the church fulfils its social identity by being 'social' to others. The term 'social' has been frequently quoted by the people in Java to describe an ideal person who can easily converse with everyone and, to some extent, is also generous. We can understand that there is a compatibility with statement Q21, which states that "the church leaders and the believers are quite open-minded and well-disposed to engage themselves in the dialogues with other churches or



religions.” The latter was responded with 86.8% “(completely) agree” and 10.2% “less agree”.<sup>6</sup> This signals that there has been quite serious efforts among the church leaders and the believers as well to get involved in dialogues with the society which, here, is represented by people from other religions. One can find that among the believers in Java the terms like '*masyarakat*' (Ind. 'society') and '*kampung*' (Ind. 'village') are often used to refer to people from other religions or a system other than the church. Therefore, there has been an expectation that the church leaders and the believers must blend into the society in order not to become an exclusive community.<sup>7</sup> In other words, the more the church is merging in the society, the more 'social' its character will be. However, an important reason that might motivate this character is respect. And this can be seen on the believers' agreements (88.9%) towards Q22, which says that “the church and the society I am living in seem to have assimilated well and have had respect to each other.”

(2) *A church concerned with 'secular' matters.* However 'spiritual' is the church as a community in the eyes of the believers, it is not supposed to neglect the so-called 'secular' matters, or if you like, the social matters. This is clear from the believers' responses on Q16, stating that “the church should pay attention not only to the spiritual matters, but also to the secular matters of the believers, such as education, health and wealth.” Most of the respondents (91.0%) “(completely) agree” with this statement. The need to get involved in social matters was shown more clearly in Q17 (“the local church can be trusted to help resolve problems occurred in the society”), to which 72.5% of our respondents responded “(completely) agree” and 20.3% “less agree”. We could presume that most of the believers might have recognised the reliability of the church when it concerns the social matters, while some still doubt whether most social problems should involve the church. We have to consider that the believers might still want the church to get involved in the society especially concerning the religious matters. The latter was sustained by their positive responses (76.4% “(completely) agree”) on Q19, which says that “activities in the society need to involve the church leaders and activists, especially in religious matters.” Those responded “less agree” to this idea (18.3%) might have thought that religious matters should not be the only concern of the church, or simply that the church does not have to get involved in the social 'activities' in this way. However, our data indicates that there should be certain ways and portions of church involvement in the society, and this is compatible with

the previous thought that the church should blend into the society.

Another aspect that could help explain about this involvement is the 'common life'<sup>8</sup> sense of the matters, as partly indicated by Q27 and Q28. Responses towards Q27 ("when there's a personal problem, I prefer to resolve it with the help of a pastor rather than a culture elder or '*pemimpin adat*'") appeared varied showing 22.2% "less agree", 43.6% "agree" and 24.5% "completely agree". This means that the believers might put an emphasis on the 'personal' problems that have a common implication in the community. The mentioning of a culture elder in the statement was intended to present this 'common life' aspect. Based on the variance of responses, the role of church leaders seems not to be contrasted with the role of the cultural leaders, and in this sense there should be a kind of common responsibility between the church and the society towards problems experienced by their members, namely, problems that can bring common implications to the society. We can relate this interpretation with statement Q28. The statement, stating that "if there is a financial or job problem, I can ask for a help to the church," was responded 17.4% "not agree", 39.7% "less agree" and 30.8% "agree". While quite many of the believers still agree with this statement (cf. Q16 on 'secular matters'), more of them less and not agree. We may presume that this situation could indicate that the scope of the church's concern with the secular problems of the people is not simply about money and job. The believers' less-agreements on this statement in a way supports the idea that the church's involvement in the society should be oriented towards the common life ('*hidup bersama*') of the people.

(3) *A church with unique and transformative roles.* A fairly strong tendency towards disagreement was noticed on the believers' responses to Q20 and Q23. The first says that "the church is just the same as the other organisations or social groups in the society" and the second states that "the church need to get involved in the political field in the society." We may have noticed that these statements were formulated in a more or less 'negative' way, supposing that the respondents would react critically in favour of the opposite. Our data showed this accordingly: Q20 = 54.5% "less and (completely) not agree" and 45.5% "(complete) agree", while Q23 = 13.6% "completely not agree", 16.6% "not agree", 36.5% "less agree" and 33.4% "(completely) agree". We can see that the church's involvement in political field (Q23) was rejected quite strongly, indicating that our respondents were critical on the roles that should be played by the church in the society. This not only presumes that the church should not be active in

politics, but that the church has its own unique functions in the society. Similar interpretation could also be applied to the statement whether the church is just the same as other organisations or social groups (Q20). The believers' tendency towards less agreement on the latter means that the church to some extent is not the same as other social institutions. The church in the eyes of the believers in Java must have been unique in its characters and functions.

An observation of the responses on four statements (Q24, Q25, Q26 and Q29) could help us to shed light on the particular roles of the church. Q24 ("the customs and traditions in my culture agree with the customs and traditions of the church") and Q26 ("when the church and cultural activities are arranged at the same time, I prefer attending the church activity") received more or less the same variance of answers, with the former 77.6% and the latter 75.5% of "(complete) agreements". These responses insinuate that the church's presence in the society is supposed to complement the existing social activities. The moderate percentage of respondents preferring to attend church activity rather than cultural activity (Q26) could be understood for the reason that our respondents were in fact church members. Nevertheless, these responses also point out that the customs, or particularly the activities, of the church as well as of the society seem to conform to each other in the eyes of the believers. Whether the church should go further than that might be arguable, taking into account the believers' reactions to Q25 ("some Sundanese/Javanese rituals can be replaced by church ceremonies or services"). The responses to this statement tend to "less agree" (57.1% in sum with "(completely) not agree"). This implies that the church is expected to supplement the roles of the society. It means also, for the believers, that the church is wished to help them improve their memberships in the society and when possible transform their sociocultural values. A trace leading to this direction can be found on Q29, which says that "the church need to use the existing Sundanese/Javanese rituals and to integrate the Christian values in them." Our respondents replied quite positively to this statement, with 76.1% of them "(completely) agree". We might say that if the church wants to be prophetic, it would better provide the Christian values to the socio-cultural activities of the believers. In this sense the church becomes 'low-profile' on its roles in the society—an attitude which is appreciated among the people in Java—while at the same time transforms the society through its members.

### 3. The Believers' Intensions to Participate

Here the believers were invited to reflect on their role and identity as cultural members of the church. They were encouraged to express their intentions to participate in the church activities and in the meantime were motivated to imagine their relationships with the church.

(1) *Participation driven by brotherhood and connectedness.* It is difficult to describe the term '*persaudaraan*' (Ind. 'fraternity', 'brotherhood', 'sisterhood', 'familial connectedness') in one sentence, for it contains a very broad meaning but at the same time a truly intimate sense. Nevertheless, this brotherhood is understood by the believers in Java not in its broader sense, but especially in its strictly familial sense. We could refer to the believers' responses towards statements Q31, Q32 and Q44 to explain this brotherhood motive. The statement Q31 ("being active in the church makes me feel more in solidarity with my suffering brothers and sisters") was responded with 52.6% "agree" and 39.0% "completely agree." The Sundanese and Javanese translations of the words 'brother' and 'sister' in the questionnaire (Snd. '*sadulur*' and Jav. '*sadherek*') were much more appealing for the respondents because it animated the feeling of connectedness, of being responsible to each other in the same family. This brotherhood has thus become the reason for the believers to do something for 'others'. Here the church becomes a 'home' for its members to recognise, to meet and to care for their brothers and sisters. The cultural feeling of brotherhood is also improved by the believers' membership in the church.

The extending of brotherhood towards the believers' motivation to participate in the church could be noticed from their responses to statement Q32, which says that "important events in my family should be celebrated with ecclesial ceremonies and prayers." 82.2% of the respondents "(completely) agree" with this statement. This means that the church meetings and prayers arranged in the families would mean much for the believers. In fact the believers in Java even now are still practising this way of setting meetings, and usually in one after the other family. This atmosphere can be noticed from responses towards Q44, which says: "I feel something is missing if for a long time not attending the church meetings in '*lingkungan*' and in the parish." 88.3% of the believers "(completely) agree" with this statement, which signifies that most of them have experienced this connectedness among them. Missing a church meeting would mean missing a family meeting.

This approach to the church as a community with brotherly relationship may be overlooked if the institutional aspects are too much emphasised in the meetings.

(2) *The image of a church leader*. One might want to reconsider the term 'participation' when discussing it within the context of the believers in Java. There might be some particular socio-cultural backgrounds that have contributed different interpretations and applications of the term. One of the particular interpretations of participation can be noted based on the believers' appreciation of the leader's image. We would consider statements Q33 that says "In church meetings and activities, the believers themselves (the laity) should operate more actively than the pastors" and Q34 that says "I prefer the believers themselves (the laity) preside the prayers or services in *lingkungan*". Both statements, emphasising the involvement of laity in church activities, were not responded enthusiastically by the respondents. The first statement received "less and not agreements" of 45.7% and the second 36.5%. Despite the fact that about a half or more of our respondents replied with (complete) agreements, there must have been some doubts among them concerning the role of the laity, which actually their own role. However, it cannot be denied that when they speak about a lay person to preside the prayers or to be 'active' in the meetings, they would refer to only some people who have been chosen or installed as church 'leaders'.

It is quite common among the Catholics and the church communities in Java to have some people called '*prodiakon*' who were meant initially to help the pastor deliver the holy communion to the elders and the sick in the parish. Nonetheless, their role seems to have been extended to presiding the prayers in *lingkungan* whenever the pastor was hindered, praying for the soul of the dead in the funerals, handling various church meetings in the parish or in *lingkungan*, and giving homily in some meetings of the faithful. Some of these duties are often entrusted to the catechists and '*pengurus lingkungan*' (Ind. 'the functionaries in *lingkungan*') as well. Thus in the eyes of the believers there are some lay persons among them who could be considered as church 'leaders'. Sometimes they used the term 'activists' or '*tokoh*' (Ind. 'prominent figures') for these persons. However, based on the results above, the role of these lay leaders seemed not yet appreciated eagerly, seen from the wide variance in the believers' responses. A potential rationale for this situation is that the image of a church leader among the believers in Java might still be much associated with the image of a pastor. Therefore, participation in the church might be understood in its narrow

sense by the believers, presuming that it could have been conditioned by their preferred image of a pastor rather than a lay 'activist'.<sup>9</sup>

(3) *Life applicability in the church services.* Four statements from the questionnaire were chosen to describe this particular intention of the believers, namely Q39, Q40, Q41 and Q43 (see Table 5).

Table 5 *Life Applicability*

	<i>Statement</i>	CNA	NA	LA	A	CA	M	Sd
Q39	The church really need to give <i>faith lessons</i> to those <i>who have been baptised</i> .	.1%	1.0%	3.5%	41.3%	54.1%	4.48	.85
Q40	I feel it more agreeable to follow the <i>Eucharist</i> held in the Sundanese/Javanese language than in the Indonesian language.	1.1%	7.0%	38.9%	38.1%	14.9%	3.58	.87
Q41	I can comprehend the message more clearly when the <i>homily</i> is conveyed with <i>examples from the Javanese/Sundanese culture</i> .	.9%	4.9%	23.0%	52.6%	18.7%	3.83	.81
Q43	As a Sundanese/Javanese person, I attempt to <i>preserve my cultural values</i> in the church liturgies.	.7%	.7%	2.0%	50.5%	46.1%	4.40	.64

We could see that these statements mostly say about cultural contents in the church services. However, the believers' responses on Q40 seemed a little bit inconsistent with Q43. If we noticed that a Sundanese or Javanese person tried to preserve his cultural values in the church liturgies (Q43), why would she/he tend to “less agree” following the Eucharist in her/his own local language (Q40)? As we can see on the table, there is a moderate tendency on Q40 towards less *agreement*. One may refer to our earlier discussion on Q4, which suggested that there might be some people not much accustomed to the local language any more or there could be preference to the national (Indonesian) language. However, considering the higher agreement on the “examples from the Javanese/Sundanese culture” (Q41), we also can presume that the matter might not only pertain to the language preference. Reviewing broadly the table above would bring about an assumption that the believers might have had another image with regard to the idea of 'culture'. We have seen above that there is a possible preference towards cultural values instead of cultural 'products'. Here we can see on the table that the believers' responses showed a pattern inclining towards the 'life applicability' of the church services.

In thus context, we can accordingly comprehend why the believers' aggrements on statements Q39 and Q43 were very strong (95.4% and 96.6% “(completely) agree” on each respective statement). These statements show



the importance of 'faith lessons' for those who have been baptised and the eagerness to preserve 'cultural values' in the liturgies. Q39, though seems to emphasise 'faith lessons', refers directly to the believers themselves. It means that the believers really need the faith lessons—lessons that, on their stage of living as Catholics, would be very significant for their lives at the moment. At this point, faith lessons and cultural values are not so much understood as simply 'abstract' matters, but on the contrary, as lessons and values directed to the real life of the believers.<sup>10</sup> From the believers' perspectives, the term 'culture' might have been imagined as everything that would be meaningful to life, and 'faith' as the way this life would become meaningful thanks to the participation in the church. In other words, the believers would be much motivated to participate in the church if the prayers, the meetings, the communal activities and religious services are embodied with this life applicability.

(4) *Informal communities and cordiality.* Some statements were initially intended to evaluate whether it is true that the believers in Java like to participate in the church within the small communities. We could find this intention in Q35 ("I prefer attending meetings in *lingkungan* (smaller ecclesial groups) rather than in the parish") and Q38 ("I prefer being active in church movements like Legio Mariae, Catholic Youth Group, Young Catholic Employees, Catholic Women Association, etc., rather than in *lingkungan* meetings"). However, the responses to both statements showed a strong tendency towards disagreement, that is, 69.2% to statement Q35, and 74.3% to statement Q38 of "less or (completely) not agree." Considering this robust disagreement, we may be convinced that there must be quite different criteria in the minds of the believers regarding their participation in the church communities.

A helpful assessment on this matter was noted from a further weighing of statements Q36, saying that "I can sense the intimacy in the *lingkungan* meetings, the same as what I found in my family and in the society" and Q37, which states that "the church need to organise more ecclesial categorical communities for the believers as well as for the religious." Q36 was responded with 94.0% of the believers "(completely) agree". The word 'intimacy' was a translation of the term '*keakraban*' (Ind.), which also means 'heartiness', 'warmth' and 'cordiality'. Nevertheless, this statement points to what the believers experience in their lives, viz., in *lingkungan*, in the family and in the society. In fact, this situation was sensed and experienced by the believers, *regardless* the kind of community they were attending. Thus, it is



the intimacy or the cordiality that has attracted them to come together in the meetings, and not simply the scope of the communities.

At this point, it would be possible to explain the disagreements towards Q35 and Q38 above. The believers were not really against *lingkungan* meetings or against the church movements. They did not consider that their participation in the *lingkungan* meetings (small groups) should be contrasted to those at the parish level (Q35). Furthermore, they also might not intend to oppose their participation in the other church movements with that in the *lingkungan* (Q38). What would make a difference in their participation was the *atmosphere* of the meetings, the informality which was much influenced by the cordiality of those attending the meetings. Therefore, their responses were quite positive to statement Q37 (on the need of "ecclesial categorical communities," 85.8% agreements), since here their participation in other activities was not contrasted to that in the *lingkungan*, and for the reason that the term 'categorical' did not refer to a more 'formal' term like 'movement' in Q38. It is implied that the believers would be motivated to get involved in the church if the nature of the meetings and activities is more informal. It is also likely that, especially considering their responses to Q37, they need more ecclesial categorical communities in the informal and less 'institutional' sense.

#### 4. Contextual and Meaningful Images

As we will see in the following, the answers provided to the respondents in this section were straight and specific, for they were presumed to be familiar with the images and these were taken from their daily experiences. In this section, we want to see how the believers provide a space for the church to continue to exist in their midst. The following images are termed 'contextual' because they emerge from the believers' life conditions. They are also termed 'meaningful' because they are presumed to have kept the believers' faith in the church. We know that when the believers are still able to express their concerns and hopes about the church, it means that there is a transformative imagination at work. With the help of these contextual and meaningful images, the believers are (re)imagining the church and its aspects. It is a 'realising' process for the believers, considering that the images are taken from their sociocultural context and not from the Scripture or the catechism. This will open the space for further study that

can relate theologically the believers' church images with the relevant biblical images.

We will go through the results of statements Q46 to Q50 showing the believers' expressions on five aspects of the church (image, aim, vitality, leader, culture).

## IMAGE

Q46: In my opinion, the church is best illustrated as a:

			<i>Cigugur</i>	<i>Ganjuran</i>
1. <i>Rice barn</i>	4.4%		4.0%	4.6%
2. <i>Big family</i>	69.4%		80.9%	61.6%
3. <i>Banquet</i>	6.7%		1.1%	10.5%
4. <i>Meeting place</i>	7.4%		5.4%	8.8%
5. <i>School building</i>	-		-	-
6. <i>Sheepfold</i>	7.9%		6.1%	9.0%
7. <i>Sailboat</i>	4.2%		2.5%	5.4%
	N = 686		N = 277	N = 409

The image of a *big family* quickly grasped the believers' attention, with 69.4% of them chose the option. We might not be surprised with this image, which already surfaced in our previous discussions. Nevertheless, this data confirms the significance of this image, since here it is straightly used by the believers to illustrate the church. Our previous analysis showed that socio-cultural communities are preferrably considered by the believers as familial communities. Now when the church is portrayed as a big family, many related aspects of the Sundanese and the Javanese *family* image would also be transmitted to the church image. Some cultural aspects of a family are the appropriateness in speaking and behaving among the members, privilege in many things for the elders as well as the respected figures, emphasis on harmony, openness and hospitality in common life, togetherness as much possible in working and praying, and the effort to be always '*eling*' (Snd. and Jav. 'aware', 'conscious', 'cautious') in one's behaviours as family's member.

All images in the provided answers above are very common among the Sundanese and the Javanese, except that the last image (a 'sailboat') was probably not seen everyday in the believers' surroundings. 'Rice barn' and 'sheepfold' could be seen in many places in the *desa* or *kampung*. A 'banquet'

or a 'meeting place' also represent things experienced or talked about everyday. It is quite interesting, however, that not one of the respondents chose a 'school building'—though also very common image in the *desa*—as an image to describe the church. We noticed from our preceeding observation that the believers did not respond negatively to the act of 'teaching' when it applies to the church's role towards the believers.<sup>11</sup> Thus the image of a 'school building' wasn't chosen, not because of the teaching activities implied in it, but most likely because of the formality of the classes or the knowledge orientation insinuated by the image. For the believers, going to the church would definitely not the same as going to school. Moreover, there is a big difference between coming together to study (in a school building) and gathering in a community *to learn* something. This should be taken into account in further discussion in order not to overlook one of the aspects that may discourage the believers' participation in the church.

The low percentages of responses on the images 'rice barn', 'banquet', 'meeting place', 'sheepfold' and 'sailboat' might have been induced by a sort of “analogical reluctance”. The believers were undeniably familiar with these images. However, there might be a certain kind of unfamiliarity with the *way* of describing the church with these images. Our attempt to expose this kind of images in the believers' discussions about the church turned out to be responded with reservation. We could imagine that the believers might be wondering whether it is all right to employ these images to articulate their expressions about the church. If that is the case, choosing the image of 'a big family' would be safer for them. This interpretation is not intended to mitigate the obvious difference between the image 'family' and the other images, since the reluctance was indeed noticed among some of the respondents during the survey. Nonetheless, we could learn from this analysis that a survey to observe the imagerial preferences, to some extent, should be 'prepared' on the side of the respondents in order to minimise the reservation.

Notwithstanding the difference between the image 'family' with the others, it is worth considering the diversity of percentage among the other images in each of the parishes. Among the *Sundanese* in Cigugur, the image of a 'banquet' was less 'popular' compared to the others, while the image of a 'sheepfold', which is very common in Cigugur, was preferable. We may want to consider this distinction when compared with the believers' preference in Ganjuran. Among the *Javanese* in Ganjuran, the image of a

'banquet', surprisingly, was more preferable than other images. When necessary, one could interpret further within each culture the consequences of this preference on the image of a church that would probably more fitting with the local culture. This attempt could be meaningful when we want to complement the aspects of the main image (a 'family') with the aspects of other preferred images. In this way, there is no need to judge the other images with low percentage not significant. We also can take notice that the distribution of percentage in Ganjuran was wider than that in Cigugur. This tendency seemed in a sense to trim the percentage of the image 'family' in Ganjuran. We may refer to our analysis above that this could be a clue to explain the 'analogical reluctance' of the use of images other than 'family' for the church. If that is the case, the wider the distribution of percentage is, the lower the reluctance to use other images might be.

## AIM

Q47: The church is a place most suitable for the believers:

			<i>Cigugur</i>	<i>Ganjuran</i>
1. <i>to confess sins</i>	1.9%		2.9%	1.2%
2. <i>to pray together</i>	21.1%		19.9%	22.0%
3. <i>to listen to the Word of God</i>	53.9%		50.5%	56.2%
4. <i>to earn a living</i>	0.4%		1.1%	-
5. <i>to learn to love others</i>	22.6%		25.6%	20.5%
	N = 686		N = 277	N = 409

We have to realise that this statement would have led the respondents to refer to the church as a building, a house of worship. Hence, if the answers provided were situated within this context, it would be quite presumable that one of the options ('to earn a living') could be the least considered by the respondents. We can see that the first three options could be categorised under the same more or less 'liturgical' context, while the last option ('to learn to love others') is more about the 'moral' intention of coming together to the church. It is quite obvious that 'listening to the Word of God' was more preferred by the believers. The responses in both parishes showed relatively the same distribution.

The strong motivation 'to listen to the Word of God' may corroborate

our previous observation regarding the 'life applicability' of the church services. Of course the motivation 'to pray together' is also important, but the believers seemed to seek first in the Word of God a life wisdom that could help them live their lives more devotedly as church members. If we see the responses not in an 'either-or' but in a 'both-and' way, we can presume that the believers would want to put their responses according to different priorities. Even so, it is probably more necessary for our discussion to see that the motivation 'to listen to the Word of God' could mirror the believers' hope to learn something in the liturgies and to bring home the life message into their daily lives. Togetherness in the church liturgies is aimed primarily to hear from the Scriptures what God would want them to do in their lives. It means that coming together to the church does not require a complicated intention than to listen to the divine message. Here, again, we can bring up earlier analysis that it is not the (cultural) 'products' that the believers wish to experience, but the life-oriented enlightenments that they like to bring home after the service. The motivation to listen to the Word of God is therefore significant and meaningful for the believers.

VITALITY

Q48: In my opinion, the church will survive till the end of the world if it continue:

			<i>Cigugur</i>	<i>Ganjuran</i>
1. <i>taking care of the weak</i>	14.0%		7.6%	18.3%
2. <i>being open to all races and nations</i>	52.0%		49.1%	53.9%
3. <i>improving itself</i>	18.8%		28.4%	12.4%
4. <i>accomodating the local culture</i>	7.9%		5.8%	9.3%
5. <i>fighting for the oppressed</i>	7.3%		9.1%	6.1%
	N=685		N=275	N=410

This aspect of the church was formulated in our questionnaire to observe how far the believers were convinced of the future of the church in Java. Hence it is inviting to consider that their responses on this aspect could mirror the situation of the church in their area but also their hope towards the church to pinpoint its mission. In other words, these are a critical reflection of the reality as well as a glance of the future. The 'attitudinal' images shown in the answers above reflect some of the most

demanding calls to the church in Java. By imagining the background in each option and taking into account the percentage that follows, we could interpret further the position of the church within the social reality in Java. The highest percentage (52.0%) was noticed on the second answer, concerning the openness of the church to all races and nations. This signals that the believers might have sensed an increasing disharmony in their society (or even in the church) which could be caused most probably by the differences of race. However, in the socio-cultural context of Java, the differences might also concern the religions and the cultures (because of the migrants from the other islands). Thus, we can presume that the straight responsibility of the church as the believers' 'new' community is to become an agent of harmony—an open 'house' for all the people.<sup>12</sup> At this point, we may recall what has been previously mentioned about 'accommodativeness'. That being the case, from the believers' perspectives the church not only need to survive the plurality of races, religions and cultures in the society, but to become an open and accommodative community for all the people.

We can see from the responses above that an 'improvement' in the church seemed needed (18.8%) according to the believers—an improvement which could mean anything but might refer to some of the believers' concerns regarding the future of the church. Care and attention to the weak (14.0%) was also emphasised, probably reminding us to one of the believers' imagerial preferences about the church, namely 'a caring community'.<sup>13</sup> "Accommodating the local culture" (7.9%) and "fighting for the oppressed" (7.3%) seemed regarded as less demanded by the believers in relation to the call of the church nowadays. Needless to say, these images were not completely irrelevant, but rather they could be more significant if the 'open' character has been achieved and maintained by the church. Moreover, the first, the fourth and the fifth answers can actually be considered as the approaches the church can take in order to become a community, a 'house' or a family, for people of different races and cultures. At this point, we might learn that on the one hand, the presence of the church among the cultural people in Java should have motivated them to live by plurality. On the other hand, the believers' assessment on the church's vitality in the society should have focused its mission in the society, so that its relevance for the people could also be confirmed.

LEADER

Q49: In my opinion, an ideal church leader should be like a:

			<i>Cigugur</i>	<i>Ganjuran</i>
1. <i>Teacher</i>	13.1%		13.4%	12.9%
2. <i>King</i>	1.6%		1.8%	1.5%
3. <i>Mother</i>	12.7%		15.2%	11.0%
4. <i>Father</i>	44.0%		56.2%	35.9%
5. <i>Counsellor</i> (' <i>pamong</i> ')	17.2%		1.1%	28.0%
6. <i>Friend</i>	11.1%		12.0%	10.5%
7. <i>Doctor</i>	0.3%		0.4%	0.2%
	N = 686		N = 276	N = 410

A process of re-imagining the church from the believers' sociocultural realities, as we have been doing up to this point, should not only refer to the church's aspects but also to the members' characters. Learning about how the believers in Java would think and feel about the church should eventually bring us to recognising the uniqueness of the believers themselves. We may realise that an effort to figure the church images in Java is actually an attempt to figure the characters of the faithful in Java. One of its corroborations can be seen in our analysis of an ideal church leader among the believers in Java. By observing the believers' ideals of a church leader, we are interpreting their images of a church they preferably belong to. When we note that 44.0% of the believers chose the figure of a *father* as an ideal church leader, we probably have anticipated this tendency. We might have thought that this tendency could be motivated by the images conveyed to the believers during their catechesis, or for the reason that this image has been associated much with the church leaders.<sup>14</sup> However, the only moderate percentage of the image 'father' may indicate that there have been reflections among the believers on whether or not this is the 'ideal' figure for a church leader. We could notice that there are other images that in one way or another should have contributed different perceptions to the image 'father'.

We can see in the responses that among the *Javanese* in Ganjuran the image 'father' (35.9%) was almost as strong as the image '*pamong*' (28.0%), which has the characters of a counsellor, a guide, or a mentor. For the Javanese, despite the intense use of the title '*romo*' (Jav. 'father') among them,



the image '*pamong*' might give a more accommodative and moderate impression than the image 'father'. 'Father' in the Javanese culture yields the sense of a chief mastering figure in the family, while '*pamong*' brings up the impression of a counsellor who shepherds and protects his novices. One could see that here the image '*pamong*' may have a 'transformative' character towards the image 'father'.<sup>15</sup> Together with the other images in a descending degree of percentage, it "criticise" the image 'father' with other aspects that probably not yet evident in the believers' experiences of a church leader. A similar interpretation also applies to the image 'mother', though with a lower percentage (15.2%), among the *Sundanese* believers in Cigugur. This could be an expression of critique towards the more preferred image 'father', in a sense that there is a hope among the believers that in some measure the church leaders should also have the characters of a 'mother', a 'teacher' and a 'friend'. We need to consider the significance of these images and not only the most preferred one when discussing the aspects of the church in Java, which often are characterised by the image of its leaders as well.

## CULTURE

Q50: In my opinion, a church befitting the Sundanese/Javanese culture should be:

			<i>Cigugur</i>	<i>Ganjuran</i>
1. <i>capable of adjusting itself to the local culture</i>	40.7%		38.0%	42.5%
2. <i>unafraid of correcting errors in the local customs</i>	12.8%		11.1%	13.9%
3. <i>persisting in reminding the believers the teachings of Jesus Christ</i>	20.0%		19.9%	20.0%
4. <i>ready to integrate Christian values and characteristics to the local cultures</i>	25.9%		31.0%	22.5%
5. <i>willing to allow the believers do whatever they want</i>	0.6%		-	1.0%
	N= 680		N= 271	N= 409

Statement Q50 was intended to examine the believers' images of the church in relation with the local culture. It is quite appealing that stronger

emphasis was put on the church's capability to *adjust* itself to the local culture (40.7%). It may remind us to what was stated earlier about the 'low-profile' attitude that is supposed to be taken by the church in relation to the society. One can find that among the people in Java any intention to change the existing (cultural) traditions might be quickly criticised. We can imagine that such situation could be worse if the church (or its leader) also has the same intention towards the local culture. Some moderate reactions might simply take the form of refusing to participate, but then we would know that this was not a good start for the church. Perhaps we can read that the expectation to the church to adjust itself is the believers' aspiration of '*respect*' within the process of inculturation.<sup>16</sup>

We know that the believers' assessment about a model of the church befitting their culture is in fact an effort to move forward in inculturation. In particular, the responses towards this statement speak about the methods in inculturation as imagined by the believers. In their idea, adjusting oneself is not so much about agreeing with whatever the others want to do (cf. the fifth answer, 0.6%). It is more about *integrating* the Christian values in the local traditions and rituals (cf. the fourth answer, 25.9%).<sup>17</sup> In other words, the cultural believers would be thankful if the church is prepared to 'explain' the existing traditions in the context of Christian faith, whether they are still in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ (cf. the third answer, 20.0%). And if necessary, the church will be expected to 'correct' what appears to be an error in the local customs (cf. the second answer, 12.8%). When these methods are applied in the inculturation process, we can anticipate that there will be a certain degree of change among the cultural believers and the church's local leaders. We might be convinced that this cultural approach is what might be 'meaningful' for the local believers and consequently what would keep the church 'contextual' in their society.

## Review and Outlook

Referring to George Newlands' idea of a 'transformative imagination',<sup>18</sup> we might see that some of its elements have surfaced in this survey. The believers' responses showed their efforts to articulate imagerially their interpretations about and relations with the church. This imagination is the believers' ability to engage themselves in "participation, reciprocity and dialogue". When the believers responded to the statements concerning their

imagerial preferences of the church, their interpretations of the relevance of the church in the society, their intentions to participate in the church activities and their preferences on the church's contextual and meaningful images, we can see 'how' they are re-imagining the church from their own perspectives. The believers have projected their cultural images on the church aspects<sup>19</sup> we have explored through the four dimensions. These church images have emerged from the believers' experiences in the society and indicate the important outcomes of this exploration. They mirror the 'realising' function of the believers' imagination in figuring the church, which is now seen from the cultural perspective, i.e., in their own intelligible 'language' and familiar images.

In walking through the results, we discovered that the preferred cultural images have shown the believers' approach to the church in the ways and images already familiar to them. Our exploration has helped us 'listen' to the believers' way of being and becoming church members in Java. The believers' images surfacing here will be an indispensable material to advance towards further theological discussions of the church images among the Sundanese and the Javanese. This theological task can be carried out by associating the believers' images of the church and the church images found in the Scriptures. This will be the next step of an 'imagerial' method in the course of dialogue between theology and culture in Java. This project is directed to contribute significant and relevant recommendations to the local churches, so that the more culturally embedded images of the church living in the hearts of the local believers will be reconsidered in the catechesis and theology. Eventually, this further theological effort may also lead through an inevitable venture towards constructing a contextual ecclesiology.

## End Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> See my analysis of another survey on the cultural images of the Sundanese and the Javanese in "The Cultural Images of Community Life among the Catholic Sundanese and Javanese," *Melintas* Vol. 26, No. 3 (December, 2010): 271-295.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Communal activity often organised by the people in a village or *kampung* to build public facilities or help certain families; the participants of this activity are invited to work together voluntarily and are not paid. The meals for the participants are

provided by whoever willing to share their foods.

<sup>4</sup> The local languages (Sundanese or Javanese) were contrasted with the national language, i.e., Indonesian. Thus, quite many of the believers still preferred the use of Indonesian language in the church services. We cannot presume that those not accustomed with local language might be the youths, since, based on the cross-tabulation of Q4 and the age of the respondents, it appeared that only 42.8% of those responding “less agree” were from the age between 13 - 22 years old.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the interpretation of 'hospitality' observed in the previous section.

<sup>6</sup> The percentage of those “less agree” towards Q21 means that for some of the believers in the respective area, the situation was not so much in accordance with the statement. In their observations, the dialogues might not happen as expected.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the Javanese moral advice “*aja adigang, adigung, adiguna*” which means that one should not rely on his or her own power, greatness and intelligence. The idea of individualism is therefore rejected in this adage, and the attitude of being 'social' is encouraged.

<sup>8</sup> The term 'common life' attempts to explain the idea of living together in harmony (Ind. '*hidup bersama*') which is well known among the people in Java. In this sense, a 'personal' problem is not really a matter concerning the individual himself, but a problem which is always related with how a person could live together and get along with other people.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. our discussion above on Q27 concerning the believers' preference to resolve problem with the help of a pastor rather than a culture elder.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Sugiharto when saying, “Since the whole life is a manifestation of the Absolute, for the Javanese it is not possible to separate the sacred from the profane, neither morality from religiosity, nor epistemology from ethics. . . The experience of life is a religious experience,” Bambang Sugiharto, “Javanese Epistemology Revisited” in *Melintas* Vol. 24, No. 3 (Desember 2009), 372.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. our analysis above on statements Q13, Q14 and Q39.

<sup>12</sup> There have been some efforts in Ganjuran to establish an open place for the people, regardless their religions, races and cultures, to come and talk together, and sometimes to organise some art performances. These public places were constructed in the form of a '*joglo*' (Jav.), namely, a more or less square sheltered building supported by some pillars on its corners without any wall or separator in between. It has no door and consequently no front entrance or back exit as well. This unique Javanese structure strongly symbolises an open attitude towards everyone, because in fact anyone may come and go whenever he or she likes to.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. our discussion of statement Q10 above.

<sup>14</sup> Like in some other countries, the common title of a pastor among the Sundanese and Javanese means also 'father' (Snd. '*rama*', Jav. '*romo*').

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the tendency that the Javanese culture is quite 'hierarchical' (see the preceding chapter); cf. Andrew Beatty, *Varieties of Javanese Religion: An Anthropological Account* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 90: “The virtues expressed here – of self-correction, *politesse*, hierarchy, obedience, restraint, and adjustment to superior force – are typically Javanese.” In our analysis above, some images could serve as a critical factor for a preference towards other (dominant) images, especially when the

earlier received moderately high percentage and incited quite different aspects than the latter.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. our previous discussion of 'respect' in the context of relation between the church and the society (Q22).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. also statement Q29 above.

<sup>18</sup> See George M. Newlands, *Transformative Imagination: Rethinking Intercultural Theology* (Aldershot etc.: Ashgate, 2004), 12, 34, 79.

<sup>19</sup> See the results of my survey on the cultural images in "The Cultural Images of Community Life among the Catholic Sundanese and Javanese," *Melintas* Vol. 26, No. 3 (December, 2010): 271-295.

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